**“Treasures?”**

Ecclesiastes 1:2. 12-14; 2:18-26

Colossians 3:1-11

**Luke 12:13-21**

 Pentecost 8, July 30/31, 2022

Jesus said, “So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

“**Asset Management**” is an entire category of thought (an industry) of **selecting, monitoring, strategically developing, and assessing the intelligence (or wisdom) of one’s “holdings”**. One ultimately does that for themself, but assistance can be had (whole careers are made from expertise in various aspects of that).

**I** am a bit **trained in it** (not financially, necessarily, nor in real estate but, probably in **all of those as well**). I’m trained to **help people prioritize and “value” assets**, **coaching (I guess you could say) proper wealth management and pursuits**. I’m a **counselor of “Asset Management” considerations** … and I do **look to help** (and **can help** more and deeper than for the 15 minutes or hour that most give me to). I actually **want to** **help further**, yet never hold my breath for **more access**. I understand that most people’s toils are for what they hold as “**their own**” and **not open to outside discretion** … yet **helping is my desire**. “Shepherding” has a role beyond Sunday mornings, so **I** know it and am equipped to do it. “Pastor” is a **shepherding** title (so I’m not just a “Preacher” or “Teacher”, but “**Shepherd**” under and in service of (representative for) the “Good Shepherd”, Jesus. And **He** (that Good Shepherd) **wants to effect how you value your “holdings”** … and He **may** want to **effect more of that** than what you’re now giving Him to direct. …. Hence the text.

**Text**

Jesus was asked to **arbitrate in a “give me mine” argument**. “’Teacher, tell my brother to **divide the inheritance with me**’. But He said to him, ‘Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?’ And He said to everyone in the crowd, ‘**Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**’” “Covetousness” is a **wanting and craving (a give me mine and maybe more valuing) that’s beyond satisfaction, appreciation for the gift of what one has, and a generosity (since it’s only a trust from God that we “hold” it)**. So Jesus told a crowd of people (His disciples but more than just His disciples) that **protectionism** and **pursuits of greed** He, simply, refuses to lower Himself into commenting on other than to **say: “Stop doing that!”**. As a matter of fact, “Stop exercising yourselves in the **guttural kinds of the valuing’s of this earth**”. King Solomon (having **acquired** more “holdings” than any of us probably ever could combined) called the **WHOLE ENDEAVOR** “**vanity of vanities**”.

Now I’m aware that much of today’s concern Jesus shows will go in one ear and out the other for many. We’ll either consider ourselves **allocated well in “holdings”** or as, largely, substantially **more concerned about next week then all eternity**. We **know** (in our brains) that we “can’t take things with us” yet want many things for the days of this life and the line between **need** and **want** gets blurry to keep up with lifestyles and others. We’re “**investors**” of what we value, and invest **energies even more than resources**. And we’ve **chosen** to invest some time here (for the moment). That’s, certainly, a Good choice. The rest of this week we’ll **choose** other investments of effort and time and, so, **make asset decisions** every day, all days, and we might not **formalize** those decisions by much more than comfort and/or a covet level.

But “**this night your soul might be required of you**, and **the things that you have prepared, whose will they be?**” Jesus tells such a parable. So He **asks you to imagine your valuing (your efforts and accumulations) if your time has come to an earthly end tonight**. ……………………

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Well, I hope I’d have to pass on a **“fear, love, and trust” in God to my kids**. I know they’ve each got their own **funds** (and an ability to **earn more or them**, somoney from my bank account they’d not need, yet I’ve got plans to leave them some … but they don’t need mine. For grandkids (too young to provide for themselves) there’s their parents and **some help from me** but, mostly, a **way I’m leaving, by which others can care for them and instilling a “fear, love, and trust” in God**.

I want my kids and grandkids **extremely conscious of eternity**. I don’t want their faces buried into the filth of this world and miss an upward focus on things Heavenly as primary. I want them to, by good habit, “reach up” to the Heavens and things godly instead of, just, “reaching down” “only here” focused, valuing this world more primarily important. I want my family to “climb mountains toward God” never “sliding down valley slopes of just temporary fun. I want them to value more “friends” than “buddies” and “nourishment” than “food” and “satisfaction” and the “Good pleasure of God” than “recreation”. I want them to know (and know-well) the difference between “wisdom” and “vanity” and strive, then, “wisdom’s way”, learning and teaching and developing (growing always) and passing on to future generations beyond themselves what’s **really important**.

I fear, though, that the **other has been more valued**, and **I’ve trained them too well the other options** than the **Good one**. It’s for that that I **beg God’s forgiveness** hopefully not forgetting to beg that same forgiveness from my children and grand-children (but hope they know what forgiveness I’m asking from them. It’s all, though, not so much the asking as the (while I have breathe to, yet, breathe) **clarifying and communicating what I, myself, value and value for them so teach during whatever minutes or hours or days or months or years that God might me to do that better living and teaching … and investing in forever**.

**Application**

Thankfully, I’ve got a **“Hero” in this task**. And He’s the “**HERO**” that’s substantially more than the lesson. He’s commended actually for **valuing those who descend from Him more than Himself (sacrificial)**. He’s **leaving an inheritance** “**of worth**” and not **“burdensome” like, just, “financial things” can be**. **JESUS** is the “man” of His parable. He the One Who’s “**soul got required**”. He’s the subject of every one of His parables … and well before any of them speak to us about us. The **things that He’d prepared** (such as a **faultless life on behalf of everyone else who should have been faultless**), He **left for** those He’d **join Himself to** and (with that) ascribe to those connected to Him and His work the Good and plentiful pleasure of God the Father. He **built us a “trust”** … and **His Father granted that as our “holding” for the sake of His Son**.

Which is **where** (defining His example for **our inheritance to our kids**) we **have to recognize and cherish and pass forward the “holding valued sufficient and forever” that we have (and to, again, instill also with our children): our connection to Jesus**. **“Baptism” unites us to the “HERO”** and all He’s built in salvation and life and eternity and (baptized into Him and that) our **“bank account’s** **“rich toward God”** and **our children’s “bank accounts” can be securing them there**. …..

Whatever else happens is “icing on **that cake**”, and “icing” is good with God’s “icing” always better and best and to be valued beyond other choices, but the “**cake’s**” made and the “account balance” is sufficient and ballooning as “interest accrues” under God’s management of that **asset**.

**Remembering your baptism is remembering THAT**. It OK, then, (Good to do) to review our **holdings** every morning and, even, all day long. Luther says that we should make the sign of the cross at regular daily intervals so as to **know-well our riches toward God**. And **faith** is just **enjoying it as the asset it is**. Faith in **what (one might ask)?** Well, **God’s Promises that baptismal holdings make us, indeed, rich toward Him united to Christ Jesus**.

Luther left for us **His strengthening phrase** that he’d say whenever struggling. “**The world is what it is and Satan tempts in every way effective, however I am baptized**” … and **that** usually ended all concern.

In +Jesus’ name. Amen.